

Bocage and Education Between Two Centuries

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ABSTRACT:

As part of the commemorations of the 2nd Centenary of Bocage, organised by Setúbal Municipal Council under the supervision of Prof. Daniel Pires, this conference aims to evoke the structures of school education that existed during the lifetime of the poet and their evolution. To a certain extent, the purpose of the conference is to highlight the contribution derived from reading the biography of Bocage, despite the fact that his academic career was extremely short. He did not attend Coimbra University, and instead enrolled at a professional training school similar to the Navy Academy.

The intellectual life of Bocage, namely his literary activity, shows that his cultural instruction occurred outside school, although his knowledge of Latin and French (acquired at school) enabled him to perform other activities, such as translation. His verses reveal, albeit from a brief analysis, a philosophical culture that was rare during his epoch.

This is what we shall also try to delve into, in the belief that the extra-curricular training, free from the constraints of the official ideology, constitutes in certain cases, the most relevant facet of contra-culture phenomena.

KEYWORDS:

Pombal Reform, Domestic Education, Marine-Guards Academy, School Education.

In¹ the transition from the 18th to the 19th century, Portugal followed the path of most of the European monarchies. Apart from the singular events of the American Revolution, and then the great French Revolution of 1789, the final years of the 18th century were characterised by the so-called clarified Despotism. This comprised the theory that the founding of national States is essentially a process of concentration of Power in the royal court and the construction, through education and technology, of an economic space based on trade.

At the end of the seventeenth hundreds in Portugal there were none of the major educational projects comprising the ideas of the revolutionary Encyclopaedists. While there were cultural circles where the names of some of the works of Rousseau and other illuminists were not unknown, these books had to be read strictly clandestinely in Portugal, in contrast to what happened in other monarchies which occasionally recruited the services of these thinkers and consulted them in order to draw up new political-social plans. In Portugal the absolute State followed other paths throughout the second half of the 18th century, installing bodies to control the life of citizens and what they read and thought, not hesitating to throw into dungeons those considered a danger or who dared to bring the reigning Power into question. In Portugal the concentration of Powers reached its height with King José I and his Secretary of State for the Kingdom's affairs, the Marquis of Pombal and Count of Oeiras. The Absolute State at this period underwent its first

consolidation, capturing the ideas in the period of agitation that preceded the 1789 Revolution. It therefore took on all the social functions, governing over all the classes, in the first instance the traditional aristocracy, and looking to support itself on the bourgeoisie.

Education was one of the areas in which the affirmation of central Power was at its clearest and was final.

DOMESTIC EDUCATION/PRIVATE TEACHING

Domestic teaching of the Three Rs, i.e. Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, as well as the doctrinal instruction of the religious and civil Catechism, equivalent to what would later be called Primary Instruction, was administered possibly by a private tutor (by the chaplain, a family member or a Three Rs master, who would give lessons every day in the home of the pupils).

This method of education and instruction was the initial stage of the private education system.

In tandem with this model was what at the time was called “public education”, i.e. lessons taught to one or more pupils outside their respective homes. The students would attend an educational institution run by a teacher who was its founder. At this time there were no school buildings built solely for this purpose, so the lessons took place in the houses of the teachers, or in less suitable locations, depending on the identity of the teacher, who at times

exercised the profession alongside other menial occupations.

In the night-time education regime, several schools were set up for adolescents and adults, which taught Handwriting and Commercial Arithmetic. These “Writing and Arithmetic Schools” specialised in the two subjects, and were generally run by a reputed calligrapher. They were geared towards boys who intended to perfect their skills in the two subject areas or adults who worked during the day in government offices or as cashiers in trading shops.

Since the Council of Trento, hence since the 16th century, Catholic bishops had the duty to teach pupils the Catechism and how to read, and to inspect the customs and religiousness of teachers, deciding whether or not to grant them licence to teach in the respective dioceses for renewable periods of time.

As well as the subjects mentioned above, these teachers administered, at secondary level and separately, lessons of Latin Grammar, Greek Grammar and Rhetoric. Later the education also included Natural Philosophy and Morality. Similar subjects were of interest to families as they would increase one’s culture or more probably serve as preparation to enrol into the Universities of Coimbra or Évora.

THE COLLEGES

Finally, one has to mention the most important component of the public school system. The main colleges of the country were run by the Jesuits. The general course taught subjects that we today call “secondary education”, in accordance with specific methods and texts.

The curricula of these colleges, which were often funded by a religious benefactor and were therefore free, gave instruction in classical culture but did not give enough coverage to subjects such as the mother tongue. The language of communication was Latin, which was sometimes forfeited in situations that the Latin language did not cater for. Moreover, for subjects such as Mathematics and Physics, the Jesuits did not keep in step with the modern scientific advances, especially experimentation. Therefore, in Portugal the Jesuit colleges which had been excellent in the 16th century when

teaching humanities became decadent when the physical sciences, with Galileo and Newton, and mathematics, with Descartes and Leibniz, gained preponderance in Greco-Latin culture².

In contrast, the Company of Jesus colleges stood out for their organisation. When class numbers were high the Jesuits divided pupils into groups of ten, each with their own monitor. On Saturdays competitions were held among these groups in the form of debates. The timetables included breaks during which games were played and physical exercises were undertaken. Once a week the lessons were interrupted with a trip outside the institution, preferably into the country. In addition to this, plays were written in Latin, imitating the classical models, which were staged by the pupils and teachers. Their organisation occupied the long winter nights.

The Jesuits maintained a well-structured set of activities for the young. Discipline was foremost at these colleges where there was a chain of command from the headmaster to the teachers. Pupils were forced to denounce any wrongdoing by colleagues. Failure to do so and they would be considered accomplices. In addition to the instruction based on classical culture, and the religious indoctrination, the Jesuits taught children and the young to be faithful Christians and zealous citizens. A Jesuit college followed an unwavering rhythm of life, grounded on unconditional obedience, on mutual espionage and on denouncement. The instruction given was more in accordance with the ideas of the Old Regime.

The major competitors of the Jesuits would be, under King João V, the Oratorians, to which the sovereign yielded a beautiful building for the college in the *Parque das Necessidades*. Furthermore, the king presented them with a Physics laboratory to teach the pupils and the public who showed an interest for experimentation, as well as granting the right for its pupils to enrol directly into University without having to be examined by the teachers of the Company of Jesus³.

In contrast to the religious orders, whose colleges were installed in buildings that were to a certain degree suitable for classrooms, canteens, sleeping quarters and infirmaries, the teachers of boys and girls had only the houses they rented, where they

taught in one of the rooms, which was hardly ever the most salubrious. In similar homes there were cases when teachers received a group of students of either sex as boarders. Children who lived far from the school, or who were unable to make the trip twice a day but who had lessons in the morning and afternoon, were left under the protection of their teacher. This regime was called *pensions*.

EDUCATION FUNDED BY MUNICIPAL POWERS

Meanwhile the Municipal Councils pursued a policy that started in the 16th century, funding the activity of teachers who had a public school, paying them in money or goods to educate and instruct the children of the council. In such cases the education was free, and teachers were strictly forbidden from charging sums for this work, unless teaching children outside the municipality.

THE POMBAL REFORM

Public instruction underwent essential changes after the Marquis of Pombal became the Secretary of State for the Kingdom's Affairs. Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Count of Oeiras and Marquis of Pombal, came from nobility culturally far removed from the "Greats". In his grandfather's hall experimental physics was discussed more than literature. At the service of the Crown he exercised the capacity of Ambassador in Vienna, Austria, and then in London. His time abroad lent him a modern vision of life, where he observed what was happening in opulent Europe comparing the abundance abroad with the indigenous poverty. He was to a certain extent a 'foreign' politician, who devised a plan, to a large extent personal, to recuperate Portugal.

Pombal advocated the mercantile economic philosophy. Given the inability of the indolent Portuguese nobility to set up profitable economic enterprises — it was more comfortable living from the table of the State — and taking into account the feebleness of the national bourgeoisie, namely the trading classes, Pombal attributed the central State the role of creating an economic sector by founding and controlling a number of large companies.

The Pombal economic policy was first applied in Brazil, the government of which was delegated to one of his brothers.

Pombal intended to redefine the role of the Indian in the colonial exploitation process, using violence to force the populations into agricultural work whose profits would be part of the same system of exploitation. The process included the distribution and cultivation of land, as well as its possible further division into farms, at the same time as encouraging teaching of the Portuguese language, eliminating *tupi* (the General Language). This policy was in complete contrast to the education applied by the Jesuits, who neglected the dissemination of the Portuguese language and resisted the application of the guidelines issued by the seat of Power.

The situation of the Jesuits in Portugal worsened with regard to their educational responsibilities upon the publication in 1746 of a celebrated work: *True Studying Method* written by a Father Barbadinho, a cover for Luís António Verney, who resided in Rome and was a fierce critic of the Portuguese Jesuits (Gomes, 1982).

One of the aspects in which the contents of the book must have left an impression on its main reader was the vitriolic criticism aimed at the methods and books of the Company of Jesus, although in one passage of his book he stated that he would have got on better with the members of the Company of Jesus if they had been Italian, in so doing suggesting that the Portuguese Jesuits were particularly crude and ignorant.

The conflict between the Jesuits and the central Power exploded in 1759. The religious Order was ordered out of Portugal and all Jesuit studies were forbidden, as well as the books written by their members. Some of the repressive acts undertaken by the central Power were spectacular. This was the case of the closing down of the University of Évora, which was carried out with the help of a military siege, including the closure of the library which appears to have included dramatic episodes.

The consequences of this educational policy was the concentration of university education in Coimbra and the disappearance of what today we call "secondary education" in the colleges, given that the Jesuits rarely interfered in or encouraged literacy. What remained were public schools of independent teachers and domestic education.

The years from 1759-1760 marked the first phase of the founding of free regal education (which today we would call *official* education) in Portugal. They also mark the first steps in the building of an education system. In brief, these reformist ideas were as follows:

- Creation of the Commercial Lesson, which was an accounting course, upon request from the traders of Lisbon market;
- Instructions for Latin, Greek, Hebraic Grammar and Rhetoric teachers (definition of programmes, methods, compulsory school textbooks);
- Reform of Studies in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Rhetoric Art;
- Creation of the function of Director of Studies, a state management board issuing guidelines on studies;
- Creation of the free subjects of Latin, Greek and Rhetoric, and their distribution throughout Portugal;
- Regulations on the teaching of Grammar and Rhetoric;
- Foundation of the College of Nobles, a modern secondary boarding school destined exclusively for the nobility.

But the Pombal reform did not stop there. In 1772 a tax on the production of wine, brandy and vinegar was created. In overseas territories where alcoholic drinks were not produced butcher's meat was taxed. The State intended to use the revenue from this tax to widen payment of the teachers who would guarantee the functioning of the Free Regal Schools for Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, at the time merged into one subject, and also the subjects of Rational Philosophy and Morality, which became part of secondary school education, which in turn comprised the subjects of Latin Grammar, Greek Grammar and Rhetoric.

It was not Pombal's intention to ensure access to elementary teaching for all. Those who worked on the land and in workshops required only the oral teaching of the Catechism. Therefore the educational system from the very start was a system that excluded. This did not, strange as it may seem, prevent a consensus of opinion among several revolutionary theorists. In Portugal, the doctor Ribeiro Sanches, the celebrated author of *Letters on the education of the youth*, a book published in

Paris in 1759, praised the first Pombal educational measures.

As for manufacturing and industrial education, this would be carried out in the workshops themselves through apprenticeships specified in the permits attributed to the different businessmen.

Moreover, Pombal brought about an important reform in the University of Coimbra, which added two new Schools, leading to the teaching of degree courses in Mathematics and Philosophy (Physical and Natural Sciences). These institutions were set up alongside the traditional Faculties, whose statutes were reviewed, not only from the point of view of the curricula and educational contents, but also in terms of the didactic practices.

As for the oceans, we note that the minister of King José I accepted the request from the Porto bourgeoisie to create a Nautical School in the city, availing itself for the purpose of two ships armed with cannons, which would be opened in 1761. This institution was responsible for teaching Navy officers and Captains, thus allowing the patrolling of commercial fleets that were constantly attacked on the high seas by pirates. The institution was run by the *Companhia de Vinhos do Alto Douro* (Alto Douro Wine Company), who proposed it to the Government owing to its interest in protecting maritime activity linked to exportation.

Under these circumstances, Pombal did not create any specialised school of future merchant navy or military navy officers. He simply educated the Corps of Marine Guards, which did not exceed 24 in number, receiving the same pay as the infantry second-lieutenants. Admission to this class was restricted to aristocratic youths or sons of general or superior officers.

Pombal maintained the class of marine guards for 13 years. A decree in 1774 acknowledged the "infrequent application and profiting that most of the marine guards had shown", ordering the retirement of all those who had not achieved promotion by that date and he closed down the corporation.

Only in 1779 (Law Charter of August that year) would the Royal Navy Academy be created, aimed at educating the military and merchant navy through a course heavily based on mathematics. The class of Marine Guards would only be restored in 1782, totalling 48 members. Their barracks were

established in the *Sala do Risco* of the Navy Arsenal, where practical and military education was carried out. The theory lessons were held in the Navy Academy⁴.

It was in this educational and cultural background that Bocage began to accumulate his experience.

BOCAGE'S FORMATIVE YEARS

The first studies of Bocage were carried out in a domestic education environment, his teachers being his Mother and Father. According to Teófilo Braga, “in the middle of the *puerile games* (...), with his *tender sisters*, he received his first reading and writing material solely from his mother. He subsequently learned French with his father” (Braga, 1876, p.13). Meanwhile, according to the same author, the teachings of the Poet’s parents had been preceded by an “extremely violent” Three Rs teacher (Idem, p.17) (Nemésio, 1943).

However, his apprenticeship in French must have begun very early. His mother, the daughter of a Frenchman, certainly often used her mother tongue to talk to her son.

The death of Bocage’s mother shortly before the boy’s 9th birthday⁵ was undoubtedly a profound trauma. We know that Bocage then studied Latin Grammar for four years. Both Inocêncio Francisco da Silva and Teófilo Braga state that the teacher of this material must have been a Spanish clergyman called Dom João de Medina, owner of one of the regal schools⁶ of Latin in Setúbal.

Indeed, in the list of regal schools that accompanied the Pombal legislation in 1772, there were two schools of Latin. In the lists published later, which included the schools and names of the respective owners, Dom João de Medina appears as one of the occupants.

We do not know whether Bocage studied Latin at home, receiving visits on a daily basis from the teacher, or if he attended the school of the Spanish clergyman as an external pupil, receiving his lessons there (6 hours a day; 3 in the morning, 3 in the afternoon). The latter is the most likely, and likewise it is probable that Dom João Medina used, as was common, the cane, despite his acknowledged

competence. One thing did not impede the other. Along the same lines, Teófilo points out that, after the death of his wife, Bocage’s father submitted him to “violent caning while teaching Latin grammar in the regal class of the Spanish priest Dom João de Medina” (Idem, p. 15). In any event, the student took advantage reasonably well of these four years, although as Teófilo states, there was such “an exclusive effort made on humanist education that Bocage learned how to translate Latin, but was unable to fall in love with the new subjects of natural sciences introduced into education by Pombal’s reforms and by the academic foundations of Queen Maria I” (Idem, p. 15).

The absence of his mother, and probably his trips to the city to learn Latin outside his father’s home, as well as the socialisation of his colleagues and his early interest in military life, afforded him a spirit of independence from a very early age. Again quoting Teófilo, in the absence of “a focus of family sentiment, Bocage acquired from a very early age a freedom that the illusory military life would flatter” (Id., p. 15).

As such, aged 14 the poet turned his back on Latin and in 1781 escaped to settle as a cadet in the 7th Infantry Regiment of the Setúbal garrison (Cidade, 1978, p. 30)⁷.

The curriculum of the Royal Navy Academy, comparable to University education as regards student benefits, covered three essential areas: Mathematics, Mechanics applicable to seafaring vessels, and Nautical Studies (*Os primeiros cem anos da Escola Naval*, 1945, p.19). The institution, according to the text of the same book, administered the Mathematics course which was taught by three teachers: the first taught arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry and algebra until 2nd degree equations. The next teachers gave Algebra, its application to Geometry, differential and integral calculus, the basics of statistics, dynamics and hydrostatics, hydraulics and optics. The third teacher taught spherical trigonometry and the art of “theoretical” and “practical” navigation (Id., ib.).

The restoration of the Company of Marine Guards in 1782, led Bocage to apply for a place and move residence to the capital. His bohemian experience maybe stems from here. Bocage’s poetry is in the street and the cult of freedom and rejection of

despotism, expressed in his sonnets and probably written in prison:

*Freedom cherished and whispered,
Which clamorous Despotism condemns;
Freedom, to my eyes more serene
Than the bright serenity of dawn!*

*Hear my voice, which cries and clamours
To see you, to enjoy your mild face;
Gentle freedom, uproot this pity
In which this unhappy soul lies buried.*

*Come, immortal God, come, wondrous thing,
Come, the consolation of humanity,
Whose figure shines brighter than the stars;*

*Come, free me from the shackles of adversity;
From the Heavens descend, for a child of the
Heavens you are,
Mother of pleasures, sweet Freedom!*
(Sonnet no. 274, ed. DP).

Freedom, attributed a transcendent origin, and understood as an existential dimension and as a gateway to the erotic world, is one of the meanings of this poetry whose audacity is clearly evident in the final verse: freedom, mother of pleasures⁸.

The Marine Guards Company course centred its study on the ship (Apparatus), followed by Handling of arms, including artillery, manoeuvre, design and naval architecture. Months after the course had started, lessons of arithmetic, geometry and French were added (Cidade, 1978, p. 31).

It is obvious that such material did not maintain affinities with the humanities that constituted the core of Bocage's cultural baggage.

Enrolled into the Corps through regal decree, as he was not entitled to enrol, earning three-monthly pay of 18 000 *reis*, he abandoned his studies after 10 months and was deemed a deserter on 6 June 1784.

This instability he himself designs as the project and synthesis of life in the celebrated sonnet in which he draws a physical and psychological self portrait (the sadness of the face, the infernal jealousy, the amateur in love at every moment and formal fulfiller of religion):

*Thin, of blue eyes, dark faced,
Well served of feet, average height,
Sad silhouette, the same in figure
Nose ridged in the middle and not small;*

*Unable to attend in one single site,
More given to furore than tenderness,
Drinking in snow white hands from a dark cup
Lethal venom of infernal envy;*

*Devoted flatterer of a thousand deities
(I say of girls one thousand) in a single moment,
And only on the altar loving the friars;*

*That is Bocage, in whom resides some talent:
Imparting from him even these truths
On a day that found him more phlegmatic.
(Sonnet no. 1, id.).*

Although accused of being a deserter, he was nominated as a marine guard in 1786, travelling to India, stopping off at Rio de Janeiro. He arrived at Goa on 20 October 1787. For two years while he was in this small town he was allowed to attend the Royal Navy Lessons, not doing the examination for "legitimate reasons". (*Dicionário Cronológico de Autores portugueses*, 1985, pp. 578-581; Cidade, 1978, p. 44).

Taking into account his adventurous personality, it was understandable that Bocage emphasised the practical component in his professional activity, paying less attention to theoretical knowledge. Therefore, in the "Maritime Idyll" *A Nereida*, as accentuated by Hernâni Cidade, the poet extols his abilities as a seafarer, always based on practical adroitness:

*(...) Of my profession what skill do I ignore?
In the manoeuvre who is more adept
Than I? Who can better lower the sounding lead?
Who at the helm, and at the rudder is most adroit?
The cargo in the hold is arranged with mastery,
I know how to hoist the sail, to set our route
Like any pilot, and sail the course
I know how to overcome rough seas
And by the cross-staff, or by the stars
I find the latitude at midday,
I know which star is fixed and which is errant,*

*The Hare, the Swan, the Lyre, the Ship I know,
And Orion, so fatal for the navigator
Maybe extremely vain I seem (...)*
(Cidade, 1978, p. 168)

THE FINAL YEARS

At this destination, comparing himself to Camões (Sonnet no. 186, id.), Bocage passed some of the unhappiest days of his life. This period saw him write some of his most satirical and bruising poems, featuring at times a profound disdain for the colour of the inhabitants, considered mixed race. But the chief target of his criticism would be the illusions of grandeur of the Goa population, all contaminated with a vanity whose enormity was in no way in keeping with the meagreness of their possessions. Here we see the scourge of his irony:

*You, Goa, in illo tempore town,
At least you have the finest of inhabitants!
Fear not that your colour fades,
Privilege of the mixed quality.*

*There is not one, who fails to say, and without vanity
That his first grandfather, brutal Quixote,
Lashed Father Adam with a whip
For doubting his ancientness.*

*So say this republic of fools
That Maratha's safe is merely a trifle
That of the Great Sultan his wealth is little;*

*Yet, in marrying their daughters, who would say
That the dowry would comprise of four coconuts,
A Kaffir, ten bajus⁹ and the landlady!*
(Sonnet no. 190, id.)

Promoted to lieutenant during the period he was in Goa, he was sent to Daman, where he stayed for just two days, before fleeing to Macau.

Macau was also subjected to a ruthless analysis. This is the reflection he believed the territory deserved from his ironic eye:

*A government without power, a bishop akin,
A den of virtuous nuns*

*Three convents of friars, five thousand
Naiks, swindlers, Christians, whose deeds are soiled;*

*One Cathedral that today exists as it was,
With fourteen stipends, without a coin,
Poverty abounds, wretched women abound,
One hundred Portuguese, all in a pen;*

*Six Forts, one hundred soldiers and a drum,
Three Parishes, embellished with sticks,
With a general Vicar, without purveyor;*

*Two colleges, one extremely poor,
And a Senate which is above all else,
This Portugal possesses in Macau.*
(Sonnet no. 196, id.)

From Macau he escaped to Lisbon, where he arrived in August 1790. The Bocage of this time was an image of the bohemian and the reveller. Meanwhile, as far as we know, up to this time he had left no trace of his philosophical ideas, and consequently what he had taught himself with regard to this cultural field. Some sonnets exemplify his ideas, of which we intend merely to present a few samples.

In the first instance, he believes in a religious faith based on reason and diametrically opposed to fanaticism. In some aspects we could almost say that Bocage was a disciple of Rousseau.

*A Being, among the most sovereign beings,
Who reaches the Land, the Heavens, Eternity;
Who disseminates yearly fertility,
And levels the high mountains of the ocean;*

*A deity only terrible toward the tyrant,
Not toward sad mortal fragility,
That is the God, which consoles Humanity,
That is the God of Reason, the God of Elmano.*

*A despot of enormous strength,
Always ready to transit from rigor to tenderness,
Lightning always at hand for weakness;*

*A creator pernicious to the creature,
That is the God, who horrifies Nature,
The God of fanaticism or of sham.*
(Sonnet no. 320, id.)

In another sonnet, Bocage refuses materialistic atheism, which, in leaving the origin of the universe to randomness, and a lack of order, thereby renders this randomness God-like and rejects “*enlightened Reason, sacred faith*”. Or as expressed in the tercets of one of his most admirable sonnets:

*But see, blasphemous atheist, see horrific monster,
Whose crude opinion that, blindly, you express,
Is contradicting your very self,*

*Because when God you are negating you do not cease,
To make Inert Randomness the Author of all,
In Randomness you are confessing to a God”*
(Sonnet no. 310, id.)

This religious standing led him to reject fanatical faith in the official Church. Meanwhile, even at the highest hierarchical level he found people he admired, such as José Maria de Araújo, elected to the diocese of Pernambuco and about whom he wrote the admirable sonnet that begins “*The Globe requires, Nature demands/ More heroes of Reason than heroes of Glory,*” (Sonnet no. 217, id.).

Despite these doctrinal stances, Bocage was accused of subversion, and of being an enemy of religion and of social bonds. In vain he repudiated these accusations in a startlingly noble sonnet:

*I am not a vile informer, vile assassin,
Impious, cruel, sacrilegious, blasphemous,
A God I adore, and Eternity I fear,
I know there is will, and not a destiny.*

*Before knowledge and virtue I bow;
If sadness brings tears and pain, I too cry and
feel pain;
I call charity a supreme gift,
I deem sweet friendship a divine good.*

*I love my Fatherland, I love the law, precious ties
Which maintain mortals in convenience,
And of infamous shackles I hear threats;*

*I see myself exposed to rigid violence,
But I rejoice, I sing, I sleep in your arms,
Friend of Reason, pure Innocence*
(Sonnet no. 278, id.)

In the light of a campaign denouncing the Poet, it is no surprise that Bocage ended up in the hands of those who so nobly rejected him from the intellectual point of view.

In August 1797 the Superintendent of Police, Pina Manique, ordered his arrest, with all indications suggesting Manique was the author of a report on the case delivered to the General Inquisition Bishop¹⁰, dated to 1797. Acting on information that there were “impious and seditious papers” circulating in the Court and in the Kingdom, he ordered an investigation as to their authorship, which was imputed to Manoel Maria Barboza de Bocage, who lived in the house of a cadet of the First Armed Regiment called André da Ponte, born on the island of Terceira. It was André da Ponte do Quental da Câmara e Sousa, who would be the paternal grandfather of Antero¹¹. At the house of André da Ponte the enquiry which was charged to the Criminal Judge of the *Bairro de Andaluz* found several papers written by Bocage, among which “an impious and seditious paper, entitled *Hard Truths*, which begins *Fearful Illusion of Eternity* and ends *Oppress your Equals with an Iron Fist (...)*”. The same document also listed other papers and books, also labelled “impious and seditious”, apprehended from André da Ponte, which were confiscated and finally Bocage was brought before the inquisitors to provide answers, as he had been captured in the corvette *Aviso*, on which he was hidden and which was part of the train travelling to Bahia.

Transferred to the Inquisition prison, he took on a stoical philosophical position which gave him strength to resist, again celebrating the heroism of Reason:

*In a sordid ironclad prison,
Of tightly tied rough chains,
Pursued by ferocious enemies,
Incriminated by deceitful tongues;*

*My limbs almost naked, an honoured appearance
By vile mouth, and vile hand, raggedly clothed
and spat on,
Without seeing a single sympathetic mortal
Of his wretched, sorry state;*

The penetrator, the barbarous tool

*The atrocious, violent, inevitable Death
Looking now at the hand of the cruel torturer.*

*Even so a refusal to chide my ill Fortune,
Even so a pleasure, calmness, courage
The true Wise one, the Just, the Strong
(Sonnet no. 275, id.)*

In the hands of the Inquisition, Bocage appears not to have relinquished his convictions, refusing to bow before accusations of impiety and social subversion that his enemies accused him of. Even here his philosophical reasoning inspired his positions as regards the world.

From the Inquisition prison he was finally transferred to the Monastery of Sao Bento and then to the Hospice of *Nossa Senhora das Necessidades*, where he was submitted to spiritual tutorship. Intellectually he gave himself up to the activity of a translator, using the Latin taught to him many years earlier by the Spanish priest and the French his parents had taught him.

Upon obtaining his freedom, at the end of the century, he celebrated above all fraternal love. Aiding his youngest sister, Maria Francisca, and his daughter, Bocage faced a desperate lack of means. He was helped by some friends and colleagues. The Freemasons helped him to pay the rent of his house in *travessa André Valente, Calçada do Combro*, as

did the owner of the *Botequim das Parras* tavern, next to the Nicola, José Pedro Silva, known as ‘José Pedro das Luminárias’, who on occasion lit festival lights in the Rossio in honour of Poets and who actually sold the poems of Bocage on the streets of Lisbon. It was him who persuaded the poet to send verses to friends well positioned in the world and who would in exchange send him donations that allowed him to sustain himself and his family. It was also José Pedro who, on the deathbed of the Poet, gathered some poems that would have otherwise been lost to Portuguese literature.

In 1805 the voice of Bocage uttered its last breath, and his poetic vein “undone by the wind” was lowered into the dark grave. The “bustle of passions” that had dominated his life, the worshiping of the “pleasures”, which he considered his partners and his tyrants, had led him to imagine the human essence as almost immortal. A pure illusion, which would lead him to advise the young to rip up his verses and believe in the divinity (Sonnet no. 7, id.).

Educated in the manner of his days, Bocage was above all what his existential path designed and fulfilled. Education may map out some routes that lead us to walk down certain roads of life in this or that direction. But it is above all the man, using or rejecting the education he received, who constructs himself in the winding trails of History.

ENDNOTES

1. First of all I would like to congratulate Setúbal Municipal Council for completing the commemorative programme marking the Second Centenary of the Death of Bocage. I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Daniel Pires for his invitation to collaborate in this praiseworthy initiative. I take the opportunity to congratulate Daniel Pires for the excellent publications of the Complete Works of Bocage, reconstituting, whenever necessary, the texts and its variants. I would also like to thank him for some precious information he provided me with to overcome difficulties when reading the Poet.

2. Some topics on this issue were discussed in 2003 at the International Meeting that took place at the University of Évora on *Jesuits, Education and Science*, which gave rise to a book of the same title: Carolino and Camenietzki (2003).

3. This did not prevent them, however, from entering into dispute with the Marquis of Pombal.

4. Cf. *Os primeiros cem anos da Escola Naval*, 1945, pp.20-21.

5. Information from Daniel Pires, correcting what is the current thinking.

6. Cf. Inocêncio Francisco da Silva (1862, p. 46); Teófilo Braga (1876, p. 15).

7. This information was kindly supplied to us by Daniel Pires.

8. It is pointed out that Bocage, like other intellectuals, viewed Napoleon as a liberator. With respect to the victories obtained in Italy by the Napoleonic troops in 1797, sonnet no. 163 finishes with this significant tercet: “*Reason is Restored, greatness falls, / And the ferocious Despotism hands over the keys / to the new redeemer of Nature.*”

9. Poor quality female clothing.

10. I am grateful for the kindness of my friend Luiz Carlos Villalta, specialist in Social History and History of Culture, professor at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, for the transcription of the document taken from the Police Superintendent’s Register (IANTT, Superintendence..., Reg-

ister number 5), which has stimulated comments from Teófilo Braga.

11. Cf. José Bruno Carreiro (1948, pp. 29-37). André da Ponte would have a son named Filipe, who would be a man of progress and Medicine in Coimbra, who would provide for his nephew during the student days of Antero at the University (idem, p. 37).

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